

Message Text

SECRET

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ORIGIN SS-25

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APPROVED BY NEA - ALFRED L. ATHERTON, JR.
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY JIDDA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT PRIORITY

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM PRIORITY

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 271305

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR, MILI, IS, LE, PLO

SUBJECT: SOUTH LEBANON: THE ISRAELI-PHALANGE CONNECTION

REF: BEIRUT 5632; TEL AVIV 9083

1. FOR AMBASSADOR PARKER: PLEASE DO YOUR BEST TO GET FROM SARKIS AN ACCOUNT OF HIS MEETING TODAY WITH PIERRE GEMAYEL. IDEALLY, THIS REPORT SHOULD BE SENT OUT IN TIME FOR A POSSIBLE SUNDAY MEETING BETWEEN AMBASSADOR LEWIS AND WEIZMAN (SEE BELOW). IN YOUR REPORT, PLEASE SPECIFY WHICH PARTS

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LEWIS MIGHT FEEL FREE TO DRAW UPON IN HIS TALKS WITH WEIZMAN.

2. FOR AMBASSADOR LEWIS: THE CONCERNS OF SARKIS THAT THE ISRAELIS MAY BE ENCOURAGING BASHIR GEMAYEL IN SOME OF HIS WILD ASPIRATIONS, IN ADDITION TO TRAINING AND EQUIPPING PHALANGIST FORCES, CONCEIVABLY COULD BE RELATED TO

WEIZMAN'S CRYPTIC COMMENTS THAT WE ALL SHOULD WATCH THE MOOD IN THE REST OF LEBANON. WE HAVE ALSO NOTED ABSENCE OF ISRAELI COMMENT TO OUR VIEW THAT THE AUTHORITY AND CREDIBILITY OF THE SARKIS GOVERNMENT MUST BE BOLSTERED.

3. WE BELIEVE AS A FIRST STEP THAT YOU SHOULD DESCRIBE TO WEIZMAN, ON SUNDAY IF POSSIBLE, THE CONCERNS OUTLINED BY

SARKIS TO PARKER, ALONG WITH WHATEVER CAN BE DRAWN FROM ANY REPORT PARKER MAY MAKE ON SARKIS-GEMAYEL MEETING. NATURALLY, THIS PRESENTATION SHOULD BE CAST IN A MATTER-OF-FACT AND NON-ACCUSATORY WAY, BUT IT SHOULD SET THE STAGE FOR YOUR FOLLOW-UP PROBING OF THE CURRENT NATURE OF ISRAELI MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO THE PHALANGE AND THE CHAMOUNIST MILITIAS, EITHER IN MT. LEBANON OR IN ISRAEL.

4. GO ON TO SAY THAT WE WERE AWARE, AND NOT SIMPLY AS A RESULT OF THESE REMARKS OF SARKIS, THAT CERTAIN MILITANTS AMONG THE CHRISTIANS HAD BEEN SPECULATING ON WAYS IN WHICH THEY COULD FORCE THE ISRAELIS TO STEP IN MILITARILY "TO SAVE THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY," IN MT. LEBANON AS WELL AS IN THE SOUTH, THEREBY ALLOWING THE CHRISTIANS TO SET UP THEIR OWN STATE UNDER ISRAELI PROTECTION WHICH THE U.S. AND OTHER COUNTRIES ULTIMATELY WOULD BE FORCED TO RECOGNIZE. WHATEVER THE FORM THIS KIND OF WILD THINKING TAKES, AND IT HAS HAD MANY FORMS, IT IS DANGEROUS AND FOOLHARDY IN
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THE EXTREME.

5. EXPLAIN TO WEIZMAN THAT WE HOPE THERE IS NO ISRAELI ENCOURAGEMENT, EVEN UNWITTING, OF SUCH WILD IDEAS AND THAT WE BELIEVE ISRAEL SHOULD TAKE STEPS TO DISCOURAGE THE CHRISTIANS BEFORE THESE IDEAS GAIN DEEPER ROOT. ASK WEIZMAN IF WE CAN RELAY ASSURANCES WHICH MIGHT ALLAY THE CONCERNS OF SARKIS.

6. DEPENDING UPON RESULTS OF THIS EXCHANGE, YOU MIGHT ALSO MENTION THE MATTER TO BEGIN IF YOU SEE HIM, AS EARLIER PLANNED, ON MONDAY. VANCE

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